

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5171

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T LONDON 13976

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR, UK, FR

SUBJ: MBFR: IMPASSE WITH THE FRENCH

1. WE SPOKE SEPTEMBER 3 WITH TERENCE WOOD, WORKING LEVEL FCO OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR MBFR, ABOUT CURRENT IMBROGLIO WITH FRENCH. AT THE MOMENT, THE BRITISH HAVE THOUGHT OF NO EXIT FROM THE DATA IMPASSE, NOT TO MENTION THE PROBLEM OF THE COMMON CEILING. MOREOVER, IN HMG'S JUDGEMENT, UNCERTAINTY CAUSED BY ELECTIONS IN THE US AND THE FRG TOGETHER WITH THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN FRANCE, MAKES EARLY SOLUTION IMPROBABLE. IN FACT, WOOD OPINED THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT ANY WAY OUT OF THE CUL DE SAC CONSTRUCTED IN PARIS WOULD BE FOUND BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR WHEN POLITICAL TEMPERATURES HAVE RETURNED TO NORMAL.

2. THUS, WOOD WENT ON, WE MUST BE PATIENT AND AVOID IMPETUOUS AND OVERLY INGENIOUS PRESCRIPTIONS WHICH WOULD
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UNDERMINE THE FNDAMENTAL NEGOTIATING POSITION OF THE

ALLIANCE. ALTHOUGH NATO REPRESENTATIVES IN VIENNA "WILL BE ON A STICKY WICKET" WHEN THE TALKS RESUME, THAT MUST NOT TEMPT THE ALLIANCE TO ABANDON THE ARDUOUSLY WROUGHT AND STILL SOUND COMMON CEILING CONCEPT.

3. BRITISH NOW SHARE US VIEW THAT THERE IS NO POINT IN CEASELESSLY REPEATING ALLIED CONCERNS TO FRENCH. HMG BELIEVES MISTRAL'S AUGUST 23 BAD NEWS WAS DEFINITIVE. IT IS FOR THIS VERY REASON THAT THE BRITISH NOW WISH TO PUSH AHEAD WITH DATA DISCUSSION IN THE SPC. WITHOUT SUCH A DIVERSION WOOD FEARS THAT SMALLER ALLIES WILL TALK EXCLUSIVELY AND DESTRUCTIVELY ABOUT DUPLICITOUS BEHAVIOR OF FRENCH.

4. IN VIEW OF CURRENT CONFUSION ABOUT WHERE WE GO FROM HERE, WOOD SAID HMG BELIEVES AN EARLY TRILATERAL MEETING WOULD BE USEFUL TO CLARIFY US-UK-FRG POSITIONS AND SETTLE STOMACHS. AMBASSADOR ROTH WILL BE VISITING LONDON SEPTEMBER 17 FOR PERIODIC POLITICO-MILITARY SESSION WITH BRITISH AND, THEREFORE, WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 20 MIGHT BE CONVENIENT TIME FOR TRILATERAL MEETING. IF US OFFICIALS ARE UNABLE TO GET AWAY, BRITISH WOULD BE WILLING TO VISIT WASHINGTON. IN ANY EVENT, HMG IS PERSUADED THAT THE THREE COULD PRODUCTIVELY MEET SOON.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE ON HMG'S SUGGESTION FOR AN EARLY TRILATERAL MEETING.

ARMSTRONG

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